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Silicon Valley's latest argument against regulating AI: that would literally be the Antichrist / This is a real thing Peter Thiel told a group of tech professionals recently.

by [+ Tina Nguyen](#)

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50

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Image: Getty Images



[+ Tina Nguyen](#) Tina Nguyen is a Senior Reporter for The Verge and author of *Regulator*, covering the second Trump administration, political influencers, tech lobbying and Big Tech vs. Big Government.

In a four-part series of religious lectures in San Francisco, Peter Thiel — yes, *that* Peter Thiel — has argued that the End Times are nigh and that a biblical Antichrist — yes, *that* Antichrist — will come to Earth in the form of onerous government regulations placed on science, technology, and AI.

These are, incidentally, areas where the tech billionaire, venture capitalist, and cofounder of Palantir has a vested financial interest.

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Thiel, 57, has lately expressed a fascination with eschatology, or the study of the end of the world, taking a notably esoteric interpretation of biblical and philosophical texts. Last December, Thiel recorded [a two-part podcast](#) about the apocalypse and ancient prophecies with the Hoover Institution's Peter Robinson, where [he hashed out what he called his "speculative thesis"](#): Human technologies, such as scientific research and artificial intelligence, have reached a point that they could conceivably cause global and civilizational destruction. The Antichrist, Thiel argued, would take the form of a one-world government that promised to regulate these technologies.

"This is sort of where my speculative thesis is, that if the Antichrist were to come to power, it would be by talking about Armageddon all the time," he told Robinson. "It's the 1 Thessalonians 5:3. 'The slogan of the Antichrist is peace and safety,' which is nothing wrong with peace and safety. But you have to sort of imagine that it resonates very differently in a world where the stakes are so absolute, where the stakes are so extreme, where the alternative to peace and safety is Armageddon and the destruction of all things."

He added later that given its economic, military, and "somehow ideological" hegemony, the United States could itself be a contender for the Antichrist. "There still is a natural way where if things go wrong in the US, it would be the fulfillment of [Franklin D. Roosevelt's] vision of the New Dealers running the world," said Thiel. "And so the US is ground zero of globalization and it's ground zero of the resistance to bad globalization. We're both. That's why it matters so much. The president of the United States maybe is the [katechon](#) [or] maybe it's a type of Antichrist, but presidential elections matter." (Incidentally, Thiel has been a staunch political and

financial supporter of both President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance, a former employee at Thiel's venture capital firm.)

Thiel's latest lecture series, hosted by the Acts 17 Collective, has been further developed from those ideas and appears to be well beyond "speculative." As summarized by *The Wall Street Journal*, Thiel's first talk focused on the Antichrist and how it would take the form of a one-world government:

Existential risks will present themselves in the form of nuclear war, environmental disaster, dangerously engineered bioweapons and even autonomous killer robots guided by AI.

As humans race toward a last battle—the Armageddon—a one-world government will form, promising peace and safety. In Thiel's reckoning, this totalitarian authoritarian regime, with real teeth and real power, will be the coming of the modern-day Antichrist, a figure defined in Christian teachings as the personal opponent of God who will appear before the world ends...

According to a review of his past lectures, Thiel draws on a theory that the Antichrist could be an individual or entity that is incredibly charismatic but talks repeatedly about the end of the world, thereby convincing society to give it the power needed to regulate the existential risks from science and technology.

Per the *Journal*, this version of the talk included references to "Renaissance paintings from the Italian artist Luca Signorelli to Japanese comic books, also known as manga." But the core message remains the same: "Thiel told attendees that "fearing or regulating [artificial intelligence or other technologies], or opposing technological progress, would hasten the coming of the Antichrist."

Acts 17 is a nonprofit run by a Thiel associate that says its goal is to bring Christianity to "tech founders, producers, designers, and creatives" who feel "disconnected, anxious, and spiritually adrift."

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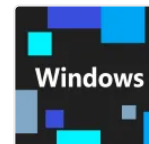
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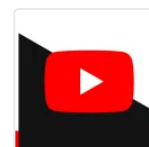
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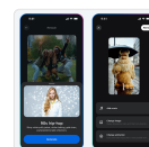
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